

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

29. (previously presented) A ferrule comprising:
a ferrule body extending lengthwise between opposed front and rear faces to thereby define a longitudinal axis, the ferrule body defining a lengthwise extending bore capable of receiving an end portion of an optical fiber, wherein the front face of the ferrule body includes a ground portion and an unground portion, wherein the bore opens through the ground portion.
30. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 29, further comprising a chamfer adjacent to the front face.
31. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 29, wherein the ground portion is rearward of the unground portion.
32. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 29, wherein the unground portion is a plateau.
33. (currently amended) The ferrule according to claim 29, wherein a plane coincident with the bore is disposed at an offset angle to a the plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.
34. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 33, wherein the plane coincident with the bore is disposed at an offset angle of between about 8° and about 12° relative to the plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.
35. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 29, wherein the unground portion extends across less than 50% of the front face of the ferrule body.
36. (currently amended) The ferrule according to claim 29, wherein said ferrule body includes a chamfer ~~chamber~~ and the unground portion is disposed proximate to the chamfer ~~chamber~~ of the ferrule body.

37. (previously presented) A ferrule comprising:

a ferrule body extending lengthwise between opposed front and rear faces, the ferrule body having a lengthwise extending bore defining a longitudinal axis, the bore capable of receiving an end portion of an optical fiber, wherein the front face of the ferrule body includes a compound surface having a ground portion and an unground portion, the ground portion having a hemispherical portion through which the bore opens.

38. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 37, further comprising a chamfer adjacent to the front face.

39. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 37, wherein the unground portion is rearward of the ground portion.

40. (currently amended) The ferrule according to claim 37, wherein a plane coincident with the bore is disposed at an offset angle to a the plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

41. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 40, wherein the plane coincident with the bore is disposed at an offset angle of between 8° and 12° relative to the plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

42. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 37, wherein the unground portion extends across less than 50% of the front face of the ferrule body.

43. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 37, wherein the ferrule body includes a chamfer and the unground portion is disposed proximate the chamfer of the ferrule body.

44. (previously presented) A ferrule comprising:

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a ferrule body extending lengthwise between opposed front and rear faces to thereby define a longitudinal axis wherein the ferrule body defines a lengthwise extending bore capable of receiving an end portion of an optical fiber and a chamfer, the chamfer being adjacent to the front face, and the front face of the ferrule body includes a ground portion and an unground portion, wherein the bore opens through the ground portion.

45. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 44, wherein the ground portion is rearward of the unground portion.

46. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 44, wherein the unground portion is a plateau.

47. (currently amended) The ferrule according to claim 44, wherein a plane coincident with the bore is disposed at an offset angle to a the plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

48. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 47, wherein the plane coincident with the bore is disposed at an offset angle of between about 8° and about 12° relative to the plane perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

49. (previously presented) The ferrule according to claim 44, wherein the unground portion extends across less than 50% of the front face of the ferrule body.

50. (currently amended) The ferrule according to claim 44, wherein said ferrule body includes a chamfer ~~chamber~~ and the unground portion is disposed proximate to the chamfer ~~chamber~~ of the ferrule body.

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